



SUPPORTING QUALITY EMPLOYMENT SOLUTIONS®

REPORT OF THE NEBRASKA

State Rehabilitation Council

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State Rehabilitation Council

Nebraska Department of Education

November 10, 2008

Dear Fellow Nebraskans,

During the past year the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) has continued to work in close collaboration with Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) in expanding employment services to individuals who experience a disability. At the SRC's request, VR has presented information to the SRC (via speakers and videotapes) on several key issues including but not limited to:

- TBI (Traumatic Brain Injury) Project - There are additional partnerships being established to work in partnership with VR's TBI Project to promote continued employment opportunities and job sustainability for individuals experiencing a brain injury.
- Juvenile Justice Correctional Program - This program will provide transition services to juveniles, including GED assistance and other vocational training, as they transition back into their communities.
- Development of the Higher Opportunities with the Power of Employment (HOPE) Project - VR has partnered with mental health providers throughout the state to work together to provide behavioral health supported employment.
- Establishing goals for the upcoming year to include a goal alignment process, which will increase staff and other stakeholders' involvement in yearly goal setting.

Other highlights for the SRC this year included the Nebraska Legislature Senator's luncheon, which allowed SRC members to meet with Senators to provide information on the breakdown of VR consumers and the services being provided in each district. And last, but certainly not least, the SRC was pleased to learn that following last year's program review with the Rehabilitation Service Administration (RSA), the RSA has identified seven promising practices being used by Nebraska VR. The practices include: Transition Scholarship; Employment Warranty monitoring; iChat messaging; Nebraska match funds and maintenance of effort monitoring, state waiver for client purchases, and contract monitoring, documentation and auditing.

In the upcoming year the SRC will continue to work closely with VR, the Client Assistance Program, the Statewide Independent Living Council, and the Assistive Technology Partnership to ensure that the needs of Nebraskans who experience a disability are being met in the most effective manner.

Respectfully,

Gayle Hahn

Gayle Hahn, Chairperson
Nebraska State Rehabilitation Council

Associated Staffing

Columbus, NE

Associated Staffing is a recent addition to the Columbus business community. They have been very responsive to the needs of Voc Rehab consumers. Associated Staffing is an agency that has placed numerous Voc Rehab clients in various businesses around Columbus. Employment Specialist Marlene Konsel describes working with Associated Staffing, “(they) are willing to provide temporary placements to consumers who have poor work history and accommodate individuals with specific needs. Ashley and all her staff are always friendly and helpful.”

Message from Frank C. Lloyd

Director of Vocational Rehabilitation

Moving Forward in Tough Times

With the economy tumbling, unemployment rates increasing, and mortgage foreclosures at an unprecedented high, we’re all in agreement — these are tough times! And furthermore, there appears to be no clear pathway to regain economic stability. It’s a roller coaster ride filled with market volatility, anxiety, and uncertainty. But unlike the ride at an amusement park — no one is having any fun!

SUCCESS STORY

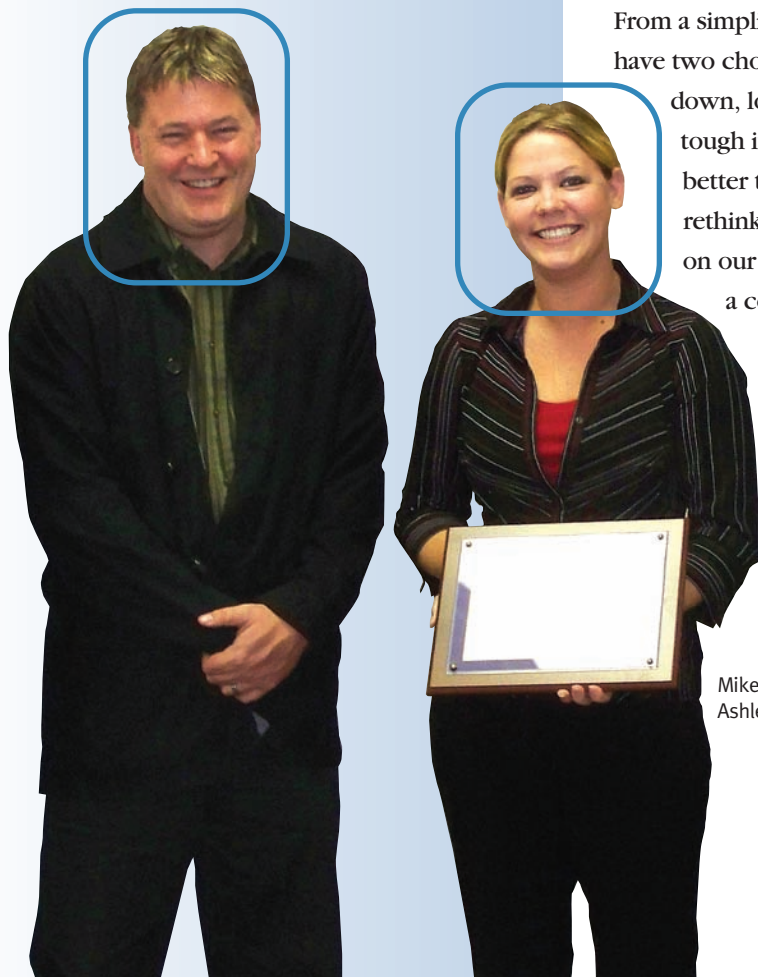
From a simplistic point of view, we have two choices. We can hunker down, look for excuses, tough it out, and wait for better times. Or we can rethink our situation, build on our strengths, and chart a course that will keep us moving forward — even if our pathway is not clear.



Vocational Rehabilitation Office Locations

Experience tells me that during tough times, it is always best to keep moving forward with purposeful action. This is the course that opens our thinking to new opportunities. To paraphrase common wisdom, “Whether you think you can or you think you can’t — you’re right!” We each get to make the choice and usually play out a scenario that is consistent with our belief.

So, what might this mean for Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)? More and more state VR agencies are moving into an order of selection and piling up a long waiting list. Given our unstable economy and declining job market, the list around the country is likely to get longer.



Mike Henke, District Manager and
Ashley Molacek, Columbus Office Manager

Bosselman Travel Center

Grand Island, NE

NEBRASKA VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM 2008

Employment Program	# people
Applied for Services	4,376
Eligible for Services	3,908
Started Services	2,567
Received Services	5,760
Successfully Employed	1,543
Continuing in Services	3,308
Success Rate	62.70%

Transition Program

Successfully Employed	251
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Employment Warranty® Post Employment Services

Successfully Employed	264
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As a consequence, more and more VR agencies will need to rethink their service delivery model and take their lead from VR agencies that have focused on specialized staff services — not on buying core services such as vocational assessment, work experience, and job placement.

This is where tough times will give Nebraska VR options not easily adapted in states that have led with their money and not the specialized staff skills of career planners, vocational evaluators, assistive technology specialists, business relations, and placement specialists.

Here are seven (7) steps we are taking in this new year of uncertainty that will keep us moving forward:

1. Build on an effective foundation. Nebraska VR is built on a valued foundation of: (1) staff working in teams, (2) providing specialized services, and (3) within a comprehensive integrated system.

• **Teams** provide the best opportunity for staff to build on their strengths, share responsibility, think creatively, and support each other. Effective teams support high staff morale. During tough times, it's better to huddle than to "go it alone." It's the best thinking of the team that will keep us moving forward.



Stephanie Keezer, Human Resources Manager

Bosselman Travel Center was recognized by the SRC in October 2008. The business has provided on-the-job training for Voc Rehab consumers. Several clients have gone on to full time employment with the company. It doesn't stop there. In the spring of 2009 Bosselman will also offer a Transition Scholarship to eligible high school seniors working with Voc Rehab. "They (Bosselman staff) are very patient when working with people who have disabilities." Cassy Kvasnicka, Employment Specialist noted, "...and are willing to give Voc Rehab consumers new opportunities."

Message...

Chief Industries, Inc.

Grand Island



Mark Moravec, Director Of Human Resources

Chief Industries, Inc. was a central part of a transition program developed for high school seniors. Chief offered welding scholarships to eligible students receiving services from Voc Rehab. To date fourteen students have taken part in the training, eight have gone on to be hired at Chief in permanent positions. Employment Specialist Frank Koch offered this assessment of the program, “The Transitions Welding Scholarship has been a positive partnership involving high schools, Voc Rehab staff, Central Community College-Grand Island and Chief Industries in providing training and employment for students with competitive welding skills.”

SUCCESS STORY

•**Specialized services** have been a time-tested tradition in Nebraska VR. While some VR programs voucher out core services, Nebraska VR hires staff with a variety of work and educational experiences so they can provide specialized services in career planning, vocational evaluation, transition, life skill, business relations, and job placement.

It is not reasonable to expect each VR counselor to “specialize” in all these areas. Most people would not qualify by either training, experience or personal interest. The answer is not to buy all these specialized services and in effect “give away” the core services to community vendors. By doing so we lose quality standards established through effective guidelines, training, and partnership opportunities.

We also lose the opportunity of maintaining a statewide program in a very rural state.

•**A comprehensive integrated system** provides an effective foundation through which to move forward in tough times. It’s not enough to “do lots of things.” We must integrate what we do so each part simultaneously supports and is supported by another part. We will continue to take a system’s approach to services, partnerships, policies, standards, and the management of essential processes, to name a few.

OCCUPATIONS AND EARNINGS FOR SUCCESSFULLY EMPLOYED

Occupations	Percent	Average Hourly Earnings
Service	33.6%	\$8.12
Office Support	15.3%	\$8.78
Sales	10.8%	\$8.26
Professional	10.1%	\$12.82
Production	9.9%	\$10.51
Transportation and Material Moving	8.3%	\$9.48
Installation, Maintenance and Repair	4.5%	\$11.31
Construction and Extraction	3.4%	\$12.09
Management, Business and Finance	2.3%	\$12.92
Farming, Fishing and Forestry	1.7%	\$9.69
Military	0.1%	\$9.75

Average Hourly Earnings \$9.48

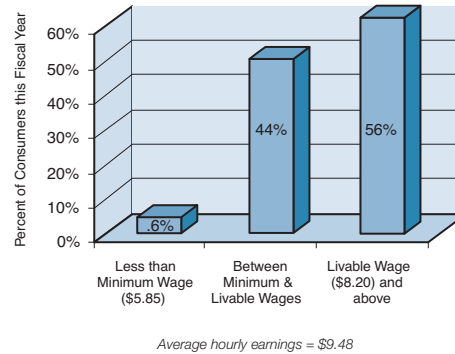
University of Nebraska—Lincoln

Lincoln Facilities Management & Planning Department Custodial Services

Ron Bailey and the Facilities Management & Planning Department Custodial Services at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) were recognized recently by the SRC during Disability Awareness Month. Ron and his staff have worked with Voc Rehab staff offering job experience using on-the-job training. At this time fifteen consumers have completed the training and have been hired by UNL. “It has been a pleasure working with Ron Bailey and his very capable staff.” Jean Bullen, Employment Specialist commented. “VR Consumers have benefitted from excellent training and have been offered full-time jobs with University benefits.”



HOURLY EARNINGS FOR SUCCESSFULLY EMPLOYED



It's not just our individual efforts. It's our combined and coordinated efforts. For example, transition staff benefit by the support of vocational assessment and job placement skills in developing Transition Scholarships.

Career planners need to understand the reality of the local job market while placement staff need to be challenged to secure employment that will help consumers reach their full potential.

Clearly the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Working from a systemic position, we need to continue integrating services and processes to assure that the program remains effective.

2. Reaffirm the value of networking and personal services. We value the support of employers as evidenced by their recognition in this SRC Annual Report and acknowledged by the State Rehabilitation Council in awards presented throughout the state. Our valued partnership with employers is built on a long tradition

of placement staff networking and providing the type of personal service that supports the employer's bottom line. Employers are drawn to our personal services in working with consumers — not what money we might offer. In tough times these vital connections will keep us moving forward.

3. Set lofty goals to keep moving in key areas. This past year, with the input of field staff, VR leadership, the Rehabilitation Services Administration, and the State Rehabilitation Council, we set goals in areas that will help us improve services and keep moving forward. These goals go beyond meeting the federal standards and achieving 2,009 successful employment outcomes in FY 2009.

Jean Bullen, Employment Specialist and Ron Bailey, Associate Director UNL

Message...

SUCCESS STORY

TravelCenters of America

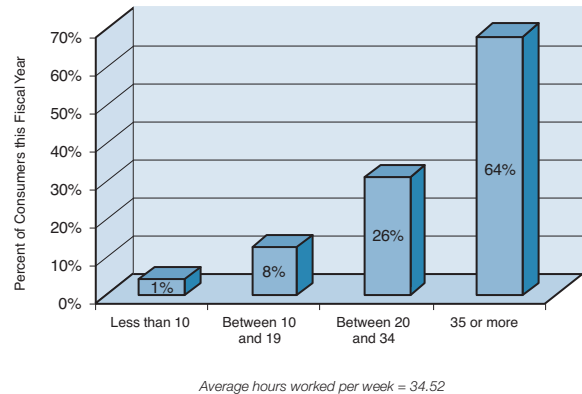
Alda, NE

TravelCenters of America (TA) has worked in partnership with Voc Rehab for many years. TA has offered the opportunity for Voc Rehab consumers to receive on-the-job training or on-the-job evaluation. For several consumers the training resulted in full-time employment with TA. Employment Specialist Danielle Redman remarked, "They (TA) accommodate people with disabilities and are empathetic to each person's unique needs." Starting in the spring of 2009, TA will also offer a Transition Scholarship to eligible high schools seniors receiving services from Voc Rehab.

We will also focus on (1) developing effective community partnerships, (2) increasing our success rate, (3) improving consumer satisfaction and engagement, (4) increasing the opportunity for staff to gain knowledge and skills in the rehabilitation process, (5) strengthening interpersonal relations on our employment teams, (6) increasing the number of transition students who apply for the employment program and become successfully employed, and (7) increasing the quality and timeliness of placements.

It would be tempting for some to ask for a furlough on these goals because we are facing tough times. But, lofty goals are what we need to discover new opportunities and to keep moving us forward.

HOURS WORKED PER WEEK FOR SUCCESSFULLY EMPLOYED



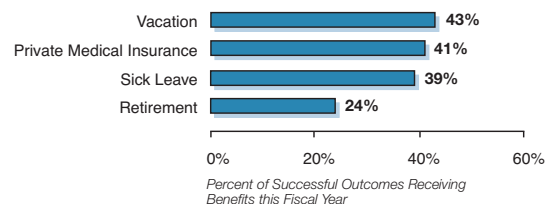
4. Explore new possibilities.

Despite tough times ahead, we are moving forward with new and promising possibilities. Consider these four (4) projects:

•Juvenile Justice Partnerships.

Our Juvenile Justice partnerships will help fill the critical gap in services for students who drop out of school and are initially unsuccessful in living and working in their community. We are building these programs based on the 85% success rate that we have experienced in the first Juvenile Justice partnership in Omaha.

PERCENT OF SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES RECEIVING BENEFITS



Bob Curfman, Kitchen Manager and
Lisa Brown-Olsen, Employment Specialist

- Brain Injury Projects.** We are building on the success of the pilot brain injury projects by expanding services to this underserved population. We have developed a staff position to keep moving on improved services for this underserved population.
- Hospital Initiatives.** We will move ahead with our evolving partnership with hospitals — to increase employment services for people with physical disabilities, explore new evaluation and training sites, as well as expand

job opportunities that offer better pay and access to health care benefits for consumers.

- Culture of Poverty.** We will move forward with our efforts to more effectively serve consumers who have lived in a culture of poverty. By closely examining our processes, policies, and standards of practice, we plan to be more sensitive to their needs and concerns. We believe our work here will also help us more effectively serve all consumers.

2008 PERFORMANCE
ON FEDERAL STANDARDS

	Federal Standard	Voc Rehab FY2008	Rating
Increased number of employment outcomes	Equal or Increase	+13 Consumers	Above Federal Standards
Percent achieving employment outcome	55.80%	62.93%	Above Federal Standards
Percent with earnings above minimum wage	72.60%	99.74%	Above Federal Standards
Percent with significant disabilities	62.40%	100.00%	Above Federal Standards
Ratio of average earnings to state average earnings	0.52	0.57	Above Federal Standards
Increase in percent whose income is largest source of support	53.00	63.35	Above Federal Standards
Minority access	0.80	0.86	Above Federal Standards

Torin Products, Inc.

Columbus, NE



Tom Bernstein, President

Torin Products, Inc has always been willing to work with Voc Rehab and to give individuals who experience a disability a chance. Torin’s staff has trained Voc Rehab clients on the job and provided work assessments. Employment Specialist Marlene Konsel nominated the business because, “Tom Bernstein and all his staff are very accepting of persons with disabilities and are very deserving of this recognition.”

Western Nebraska Community College

Scottsbluff, NE



Left to right: Patricia Kraemer-Voc Rehab
Employment Specialist and Eileen Ely-Western
Nebraska Community College President

SUCCESS STORY

Over the past twenty years, Western Nebraska Community College (WNCC) and Voc Rehab have had a successful partnership. WNCC has hired over ten VR clients for various positions including office support, building maintenance, groundskeeping, food service, teacher aides, and tutors. WNCC provides office space for VR staff to meet with clients, WNCC students, and staff at the Scottsbluff Campus, Sidney Center, and Alliance Center. Dr. Eileen E. Ely, WNCC College President commented, “Through a wonderful working relationship with ...Vocational Rehabilitation, our service area is able to benefit from the training and job placement of students and citizens.”

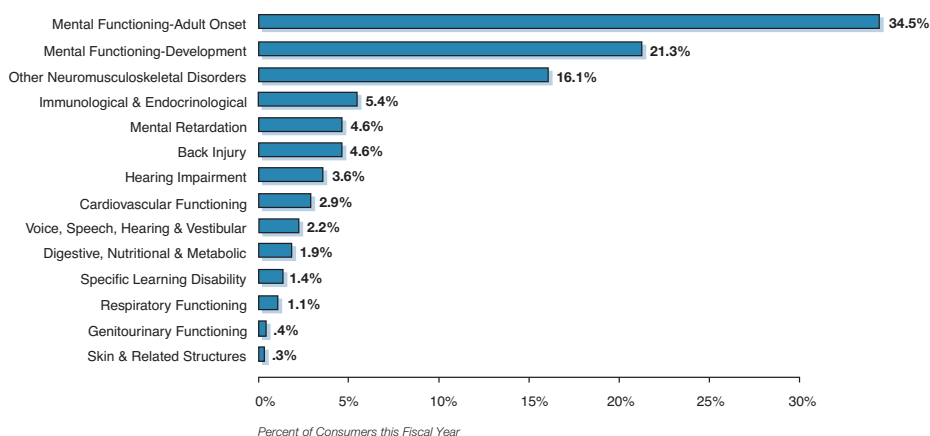
Message...

5. Stay in touch with the consumers. Particularly during tough times, it is important to assess a consumer's level of satisfaction for the services they receive. Our recently developed Consumer Satisfaction survey will provide detailed feedback that will help us improve our services and the manner of working with consumers. The feedback will assure that the consumers continue to be satisfied with their experience at Vocational Rehabilitation. The system provides a mechanism for the SRC to monitor consumer satisfaction with VR services as required by law.

6. Expand job opportunities for transition students. The Transition Scholarships are providing a unique training and job placement opportunity for students. We will continue to partner with employers and expand the range of career options for students who are looking for an alternative to traditional post-secondary training.

The recently developed career planning guide for transition students will also help coordinate career planning information provided by Vocational Rehabilitation and information available through the student's school record.

LEADING CAUSES OF IMPAIRMENT FOR THOSE WHO RECEIVED SERVICES



Amcon Distributing Company

Omaha, Nebraska

7. Stay focused on long-term job success. During tough times it's important not to reduce our commitment to long-term success. For this reason, we will continue our commitment to the Employment Warranty® program to increase the likelihood that consumers will have the support to keep their job, regain employment, or advance in employment.

Going into tough times doesn't mean that we will now have a lot of free time while waiting for things to get better. Staff will continue to have busy workloads. So it's not free times that we'll find. On the contrary, pushing

forward and reaching for new heights will uncover possibilities that would not occur to us if we were comfortably performing our work during good times.

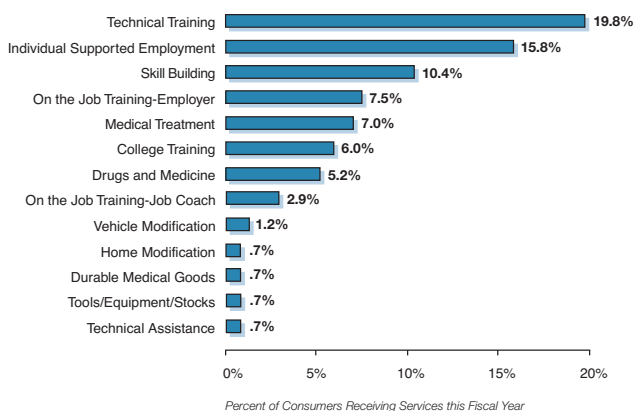
Tough times can bring out the best in any of us if we find ways to keep moving forward. We will not persevere on how bad our situation might be or on what veiled threat might be ahead. We will continue to offer the best we have, take purposeful courses of action, and keep moving forward!

Frank C. Lloyd

Frank C. Lloyd
Director, Vocational Rehabilitation

Fred Hawlik, Warehouse Manager for Amcon Distributing Company, accepted the SRC Employer recognition plaque in October 2008. Since 2003, Amcon has hired more than forty Voc Rehab consumers to work in the warehouse. Susan Hagen, Employment Specialist, describes Fred as, "...a champion for individuals experiencing disabilities. He is willing to provide opportunities for any consumer I bring to him. He does not look at anyone in terms of his or her disability. Rather, he considers their abilities and helps to place them where their talents are best suited in the warehouse."

SERVICES PROVIDED BY COMMUNITY AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS FOR SUCCESSFULLY EMPLOYED



Left to right Fred Hawlik, Warehouse Manager and Mitch Arnold, SRC

Sehnert's Bakery & Bieroc Cafe

McCook, NE

Sehnert's Bakery & Bieroc Cafe, based in Columbus, has a long history with Voc Rehab. Several Voc Rehab consumers have been successfully placed in jobs at the bakery. These placements include table bussing, bakery worker, and food packager. Sehnert's is willing to bring in a job coach and work with the needs of the employee. Katie Cain, Voc Rehab Employment Specialist summed it up saying, "Matt Sehnert (owner) and his staff are great to work with. They are always willing to give someone a chance and ... help them succeed."

Annual Program Costs

	Cost of Program
Administration	\$3,493,678.00

CLIENT SERVICES

	Cost of Program
Provided by VR Staff	\$11,048,879.00
Purchased from Community Rehab Programs	\$1,304,033.00
Purchased from Other Vendors	\$5,523,421.00
Total	\$17,876,333.00

PURCHASED FOR CLIENTS

	Cost of Program
Assessment	\$ 570,149.00
Higher Education	\$1,954,443.00
Miscellaneous Training	\$1,738,380.00
Maintenance	\$167,238.00
Personal Assistance Service	\$14,659.00
Transportation	\$ 346,567.00
Rehabilitation Technology Services	\$1,742,551.00
Small Business Enterprise	\$101,778.00
All Other Services	\$2,036,018.00
Total	\$8,671,783.00
Grand Total	\$21,370,011.00



Left to right Katie Cain-Voc Rehab Employment Specialist, Jennifer Swartz-Retail Manager and Jerri Barber-Production Manager

State Rehabilitation Council Members

October 1, 2007—September 30, 2008



Mitch Arnold—Omaha

Mitch is the president of Preferred Partners, LLC, an Omaha based recruiting company. He has two bachelor's degrees from the University of Nebraska-Kearney and an M.S. in Technical Communication at North Carolina State University. Mitch is a member of the SRC's Employer Services Committee. He is a governor-appointee to the Nebraska Workforce Investment Board and member of the Community Council for the Nebraska Information Technology Commission. Mitch's civic involvement includes the Muscular Dystrophy Association, March of Dimes, and ALS in the Heartland.



Katie Durfee—Fairbury

Katie describes herself as a young woman who has Cerebral Palsy. She received a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Doane College in Crete, Nebraska with a minor in Sociology. Katie has been volunteering at Noah's Assistant Dogs for three years as a fund-raiser and assistant trainer. Her own service dog, Keya, came from Noah's. Katie is considering pursuing a Master's Degree in Social Work. She plans to be a Social Worker and help other children and adults with any kind of disability and/or disadvantage. Katie serves on the SRC's Transition Services Committee.



Alvin Fox—McCool Junction

In addition to farming, Alvin has an in-home business making greeting cards. He has a strong interest in assisting individuals with disabilities. Alvin spent three years as a non-paid lobbyist in the state legislature working on disability concerns. He served on committees that worked on legislation including development of handicapped parking permit laws and the lemon law for assistive technology. Alvin previously served on the Nebraska Statewide Independent Living Council (NESILC.) He is a member of the Transition Services Committee for the SRC.



Susan Gieschen—Brule

Susan (Sue) has been Keith County Treasurer since 1995. Currently she is the secretary for the Nebraska Association of County Treasurers. Sue is also the West Region Director of Special Olympics Nebraska and a certified coach for swimming, bowling, basketball, track, and equestrian for Special Olympics Nebraska. She belongs to a number of organizations and serves on several boards with an emphasis on those that deal with people who experience a disability. Her youngest son experiences a learning disability. Sue serves on the SRC to advocate not only for her son but also for others who experience a disability. She sits on the Employer Services Committee, in addition, she is Vice Chairperson for the Council.



Gayle Hahn—Hastings

Gayle works as a Work Incentive Specialist for Easter Seals Nebraska (ESN). She graduated from Hastings College with a degree in Business Administration & Human Resource Management with a minor in Psychology. Gayle received Voc Rehab services in high school and while attending college. She is serving a second term as Chairperson for the SRC and is a member of the Transition Services Committee. Gayle is the past president (and a current board member) of the Adams County Child Development Council and serves on the Hastings Literacy Program Board. She had previously served as a board member of Fiduciary Inc.



Jason Kerkman—Lincoln

Jason is a Workforce Coordinator with Nebraska's Department of Labor. He provides case management for the Veterans Workforce Investment Program. Jason has a B.S. in Social Work from Carroll University, Waukesha, WI. He will soon complete his Master's Degree in Public Health. Jason had received placement services from Voc Rehab after moving to Nebraska in 2004. He is the Chairperson of the SRC's Employer Services Committee.

State Rehabilitation Council Members

October 1, 2007—September 30, 2008



Les Kimmons—Omaha

When introducing himself, Les describes himself first as “Mike’s Dad.” His son has received successful Voc Rehab services and employment. Les is a Training & Information Specialist at PTI Nebraska (Parent Training and Information for Families of Children with Disabilities). He has worked for the organization for over twenty years. He is a graduate of the University of Nebraska—Lincoln with a B.S.B.A. in Management. Les has a lifelong involvement with people who happen to have disabilities. In addition to the SRC (where he serves on the Client Services Committee) he is a member of the Mayor’s Commission for Citizens with Disabilities (MCCD) in Omaha.



Kipp Ransom—Lincoln

Kipp is the Lead Counselor at Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital’s Spinal Cord Injury Unit. He works with both inpatients and outpatients. Kipp received his Bachelor’s Degree in Psychology and his Master’s Degree in counseling from the University of Nebraska-Kearney. His clinical interest is working with the spinal cord injury population, neurotrauma, and orthopedic population, as well. Kipp is the Chair of the Client Services Committee. He is an avid sports enthusiast and enjoys outdoor recreation.



Tim Kolb—Franklin

Tim was born with a rare form of Muscular Dystrophy known as Werdnig-Hoffman Syndrome or spinal muscular atrophy. He has a Bachelor of Science Degree in Education with a double major in Physics and Mathematics from Kearney State College. Tim has been active in disability issues for more than twenty years. In addition to sitting on the SRC’s Client Services Committee, he is a member of the Nebraska Statewide Independent Living Council (NESILC) and is the CEO and Executive Director of the Kolb Foundation for Disability Education. Tim’s goals for himself and others with disabilities are summed up in the motto of his Foundation; which reads, “Living... Not Just Surviving.”



Vicki Rasmussen—Lincoln

Vicki is the Director of the Nebraska Client Assistance Program (CAP), a position she has held for twenty-three years. CAP provides problem solutions for the clients of Vocational Rehabilitation, Nebraska Commission for the Blind & Visually Impaired, and the Centers for Independent Living. She has a Bachelor’s degree in Speech and Business Secondary Education from the University of Nebraska-Kearney. Vicki is a member of the Client Services Committee as well as a member of Nebraska Advocacy Services Board of Directors.



Frank Lloyd—Lincoln

Since 1994, Frank has been the Assistant Commissioner of Education and Director of Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation. He has a B.S. in Psychology and a M.S. in Special Education from Central Missouri State University. He is a member of the SRC’s Transition Services Committee, the State Mental Health Advisory Committee, and the Nebraska Planning Council on Developmental Disabilities. Frank has forty two years of progressively responsible experiences in Vocational Rehabilitation.



Angela Smith—Kearney

Based out of Kearney, Angela works for Assistive Technology Partnership (ATP). She has been with ATP for two years as a Transition Specialist. Angela has a B.S. in Human Service and Social Service Administration from Bellevue University. She has a passion for working with people with disabilities. Angela is the Chairperson of the SRC’s Transition Services Committee.



Larry Niemeyer—Norfolk

Larry has worked for Voc Rehab over thirty-three years. Based in the Norfolk area, he began as a Voc Rehab counselor with a special focus in the area of Behavioral Health. Larry later became an office director, his current position. He has a Master's Degree in Counseling from Wayne State College. Larry is the Board President of Linke Halfway House in Norfolk, previously served on the Nebraska Statewide Independent Living Council (NESILC), and is a member of the Transition Services Committee for the SRC.



Vicki Obrecht—Lincoln

Vicki is the Special Education Coordinator for Southeast High School with Lincoln Public Schools. She has been at Southeast High School for seventeen years, and with Lincoln Public Schools for thirty years. Vicki has been a teacher at elementary and middle school levels and a Special Education Coordinator. She has a Bachelor of Science Degree in Education, a Master's Degree in Education, and a Doctorate in Cultural and Psychological Studies. Vicki joined the SRC as an individual responsible for the public education of students with disabilities, she serves on the Transition Services Committee.



Debra Osentowski—Geneva

Debra joined the SRC as a parent of a son who has learning disabilities as a result of Epilepsy (a seizure disorder). Her son now lives independently in Lincoln, working at the local Walmart with the help of a good support system. Debra is a self-employed bookkeeper who deals with her own physical issues resulting from scoliosis. Serving on the SRC, she is a member of the Client Services Committee. Debra's interests include bike riding, walking, movies, golf, dancing, and other physical activities.



Terry L. Wilson—Indianola

Prior to kidney failure, Terry had no idea of the services available to people who experience a disability. He had been a truck driver when he developed kidney failure and after years of dialysis Terry had a kidney transplant. Complications from the transplant medications left him unable to continue as a truck driver. Terry contacted Voc Rehab and successfully received services. He would like to advocate by providing resources for those who need help to keep them in their jobs or to find jobs that suit their needs. Terry serves on SRC's Transition Services Committee.



Pearl Van Zandt—Lincoln

Pearl is the Executive Director of the Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired. In addition to serving on the Employer Services Committee for the SRC, she is a member of the Nebraska Workforce Investment Board. Pearl has a Ph.D. in Community and Human Resources received from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

SRC Committee Reports

CONSUMERS SERVED BY LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

District	Total	Percent
1	119	2.1
2	70	1.2
3	22	0.4
4	24	0.4
5	71	1.2
6	50	0.9
7	92	1.6
8	101	1.8
9	107	1.9
10	105	1.8
11	188	3.3
12	55	1.0
13	92	1.6
14	18	0.3
15	86	1.5
16	104	1.8
17	179	3.1
18	176	3.1
19	290	5.0
20	57	1.0
21	77	1.3
22	200	3.5
23	139	2.4
24	136	2.4
25	105	1.8
26	95	1.6
27	93	1.6
28	381	6.6
29	151	2.6
30	103	1.8
31	35	0.6
32	126	2.2
33	296	5.1
34	81	1.4
35	183	3.2
36	175	3.0
37	183	3.2
38	96	1.7
39	22	0.4
40	142	2.5
41	129	2.2
42	154	2.7
43	103	1.8
44	69	1.2
45	27	0.5
46	108	1.9
47	102	1.8
48	150	2.6
49	93	1.6

Transition Services Committee

Members: Katie Durfee, Alvin Fox, Gayle Hahn, Larry Niemeyer, Terry Wilson, Frank Lloyd, Vicky Obrecht, and Angela Smith (Chair)

Jack Shepard-VR Advisor

After a review of the transition survey taken by Special Education staff members from schools across Nebraska, the SRC Transition Services Committee provided the following recommendations to Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) for their review and possible implementation:

- Increase awareness among Special Education staff members by VR transition staff members that the VR program provides services from a team structure. As a result, Special Education staff would be able to utilize the varied expertise of each team's membership.
- Increase the involvement of VR placement staff with transition students who are seeking employment. Placement staff offer Job Seeking Skills classes which include: methods to find jobs,

completion of applications, interview skills, and keeping the job.

- Develop a visitation schedule or calendar with each school's Special Education Department at the beginning of each school year. Review VR agency and school policy changes that occur year to year.
- Increase awareness regarding VR services among school nurses and guidance counselors who often manage students under 504 plans. Students under 504 plans often have physical and/or mental health disabilities.

During the past year, a Youth Leadership Council was established and a coordinator has been hired to begin organizing activities to implement the Council. The intent of the Youth Leadership Council is to develop leadership skills and to act in an advisory capacity to the VR program regarding transition matters. The Council will report to the SRC.

Employer Services Committee

Members: Mitch Arnold, Sue Gieschen, Pearl Van Zandt, and Jason Kerkman (Chair)

Jim Coyle-VR Advisor

A motion was made and approved for the SRC to recognize employers of the year in the State of Nebraska. Local VR offices nominated the employers based on their hiring practices and work with VR. Twelve employers throughout the state were recognized in the month of October, which is National Disability Employment Awareness month.

The committee supported VR marketing initiatives to employers and organizations. These initiatives included developing labor market packets and incorporating ATP in the marketing of the Transition Scholarship Program.

About twenty State Senators attended an informational luncheon held by the SRC. The luncheon educated the attendees about the services offered by VR. The event was a success and a 2009 event is in the early stages of planning.

A statewide training featuring Erin Reihle from Cincinnati Children's Hospital was held in September. VR staff and hospital human resources personnel from across the state attended. The purpose of the training was to help develop better hiring practices and training opportunities in hospitals for individuals with disabilities.

The committee continues to support legislation that promotes the employment of people with disabilities.

A fact sheet was developed for use with Senators and Employers.

A satisfaction survey for consumers was developed that centers on their satisfaction with job placement services.

CUSTOMER SERVICE VALUES

Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation is dedicated to quality employment solutions for individuals with disabilities.

We empower by:

Respecting the individual.

Appreciating differences.

Communicating effectively.

Focusing on strengths.

Thinking creatively.

Acting responsibly.

SRC Committee Reports

CONTACT INFORMATION:

The State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) values the input and involvement of all citizens in Nebraska regarding rehabilitation services. All SRC meetings are open to the public and are a great opportunity for the public to voice concerns.

MEETINGS:

Meeting dates, times and locations are posted on the Vocational Rehabilitation web site at www.vocrehab.state.ne.us.

WRITE:

State Rehabilitation Council Chairperson
Nebraska Department of Education
301 Centennial Mall South
P.O. Box 94987
Lincoln, NE 68509

CALL:

402.471.3657
877.637.3422 (V/TTY)

FAX:

402.471.0788

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Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation.

Client Services Committee

Members: Victoria Rasmussen,
Debra Ostentowski, Les Kimmons
and Kipp Ransom (Chair)

Don Crouch-VR Advisor

The Client Services Committee made the following recommendations to Vocational Rehabilitation this past year.

Several suggestions were made regarding the on-line satisfaction surveys the agency developed. These are the surveys that consumers complete immediately after their initial appointment,

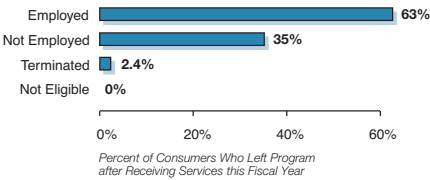
during their career planning, at the time the IPE is completed and during the job placement phase.

The committee offered ideas to VR on how to make the surveys work for individuals who are deaf.

Suggestions were also made to improve the self assessment IPE booklet used by consumers.

It was recommended the agency create a position for a staff person who specializes in the area of autism who could train and support other staff members.

OUTCOME FOR CONSUMERS EXITING PROGRAM AFTER RECEIVING SERVICES



OFFICE LOCATIONS

Columbus serves counties:

Butler, Colfax, Nance, Platte and Polk
3020 18th Street, Suite 2, Columbus, NE 68601
(402) 562-8065 V/TTY, (877) 505-0866 V/TTY
vr.columbus@vr.ne.gov

Fremont serves counties:

Dodge
2951 North Clarkson Street, Fremont, NE 68025
(402) 727-2900 V, (888) 585-5439 V
vr.fremont@vr.ne.gov

Grand Island serves counties:

Adams, Clay, Fillmore, Greeley, Hall, Hamilton,
Howard, Merrick, Nuckolls, Thayer, Webster, York
3335 West Capital Avenue, Grand Island, NE 68803
(308) 385-6200 V/TTY, (800) 862-3382 V/TTY
vr.grandisland@vr.ne.gov

Kearney serves counties:

Blaine, Buffalo, Custer, Franklin, Furnas, Garfield,
Harlan, Kearney, Loup, Phelps, Sherman, Valley
2916 West 24th Street, Kearney, NE 68845
(308) 865-5343 V/TTY, (800) 262-3382 V/TTY
vr.kearney@vr.ne.gov

Lincoln serves counties:

Gage, Jefferson, Johnson, Lancaster, Nemaha, Otoe,
Pawnee, Richardson, Saline, Saunders, Seward
5143 South 48th Street, Lincoln, NE 68516
(402) 471-3231 V, (402) 471-6341 TTY
(800) 472-3382 V/TTY
vr.lincoln@vr.ne.gov

Norfolk serves counties:

Antelope, Boone, Boyd, Brown, Burt, Cedar, Cuming,
Dixon, Holt, Keya Paha, Knox, Madison, Pierce, Rock,
Stanton, Wayne, Wheeler
1212 Benjamin Avenue, Norfolk, NE 68701
(402) 370-3200 V/TTY, (800) 442-3382 V/TTY
vr.norfolk@vr.ne.gov

North Platte serves counties:

Arthur, Chase, Cherry, Dawson, Dundy,
Frontier, Gosper, Grant, Hayes, Hitchcock, Hooker, Keith,
Lincoln, Logan, McPherson, Perkins, Red Willow, Thomas
200 South Silber, Bldg. #2, North Platte, NE 69101
(308) 535-8100 V/TTY, (800) 272-3382 V/TTY
vr.northplatte@vr.ne.gov

Omaha-Downtown serves counties:

Cass, Dodge, Douglas, Sarpy, Washington
1313 Farnam on the Mall, Omaha, NE 68102
(402) 595-2100 V, (402) 595-2107 TTY
(800) 554-3382
vr.omaha@vr.ne.gov

Omaha-West serves counties:

Dodge, Douglas
12011 Q Street, Omaha, NE 68137
(402) 595-1212 V/TTY, (877) 240-4445 V/TTY
vr.omahawest@vr.ne.gov

Scottsbluff serves counties:

Banner, Box Butte, Cheyenne, Dawes, Deuel, Garden,
Kimball, Morrill, Scotts Bluff, Sheridan, Sioux
1517 Broadway, Suite 131, Scottsbluff, NE 69361
(308) 632-1321 V/TTY, (800) 292-3382 V/TTY
vr.scottsbluff@vr.ne.gov

South Sioux City serves counties:

Dakota, Thurston
901 West 21st Street, Suite 1,
South Sioux City, NE 68776
(402) 494-2265 V/TTY, (877) 659-7899 V/TTY
vr.southsioux@vr.ne.gov

State Office (located in Lincoln):

301 Centennial Mall South, PO Box 94987,
Lincoln, NE 68509-4987
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State Rehabilitation Council

Department of Education
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Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-4987